

Dear Family,

July 18, 1995

Another month laboring to sell our house. Sherlene's first break from school in abt. two years is not much of a break. She has been mostly at or near the phone, as we advertised heavily in New Jersey and had some major ads in NYC papers too. Too many local responses were "No thanks" to North Maple Avenue as one of Basking Ridge's main thoroughfares. This once country road gives a worse impression currently because another main road in town is closed for construction.

Between phone calls, Sherlene has been spending full days at the keyboard, entering family history. She is up to 12,000 names in her PAF database.

Sherlene substituted the last two weeks in our gospel doctrine Sunday School class. She used the video Sunday showing the last supper, Gethsemane and crucifixion. Powerful! The authentic, graphic portrayal is perhaps guilty of understatement dictated by brevity. We should use these New Testament videos from our ward library more often to supplement and illustrate our lessons and study.

Besides this, Sherlene's received a bound copy of some of her missionary experiences, as published by BYU's Redd Center for Western History as part of an oral history / interview project focusing on women missionaries of that time period.

Dan spent ten days in New Jersey, first seeing the renters off as they moved to the Boston area and then going to work. It was not too bad for a first NJ visit in more than 2-1/2 years. The renters were very good inside. Still, there was much touch up of paint and grouting inside and plenty of work outside--putting down weed and feed for 1 acre, weeding, pruning and trimming 2-1/2 years worth shrub overgrowth (which fortunately restrained weed growth), and dock renewal and re-sealing. The unplanned replacement of an attic fan took two days (mainly chasing around to find the right solution--manufacturer redesign ruled out simple motor replacement).

Besides the work, Dan put up Sale and Open House signs and packed a cordless phone, answering the phone and showing the house while working. Especially fun when sweat-drenched or in the middle of painting!

It was great to stay with John and Winnie Stobaecus at night, enjoy their friendship, and sleep in a real bed. They are in their 80's and were packing, themselves, for their move to Florida. It was also good to see neighbors and wonderful to exchange hugs with the members of our now split North Branch Ward and the new Hillsborough Branch. The members have their church work and missionary work cut out and are valiantly doing it!

I dropped some daylilies I had potted at Cy and Louise Deverys', Presbyterian friends in Basking Ridge. She made me sit down to share the spiritual blessing she had felt through Sherlene's and our friendship and especially through her recent bout with cancer. An extra good spirit was there as we talked. She is so grateful for her healing, or at least respite, and is asking the Lord what he wants her to do. One insight led to another. She has wondered for years how God would

reconcile the differing Christian groups, since Christ is universal--not to mention the majority that have not known of Christ. I think she'll read Pres. J. F. Smith's vision of the spirit world. I'm sending her Michael Ballam's tapes on music and healing and probably the book, Return from Tomorrow. As we parted, she gave me a book for Sherlene their pastor is using for summer sermons. It's called Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Yes, by Steve Covey, for whom Sherlene once baby-sat. Everything in our conversation seemed to come full circle.

I needed and was blessed with a triple miracle making the plane back. An hour behind, I was the only one on the Budget Rental Car bus, and a great young black woman driver navigated through airport traffic with extra help. I gave her a tip and my Book of Mormon. Out of pure helpfulness, a black woman skycap ordered a boy to give me a luggage cart he was sitting in outside the airport. I've never seen a luggage cart at that airport before, at least available for people to use. And then a couple of women at the ticket / luggage check in counter saw me through instantly and miraculously. I ended up next to a wonderful black couple from Hampton, VA, on their way to Houston for treatment of his newly discovered lymphoma / leukemia. She readily accepted my offer to send her a copy of the Book of Mormon.

It was good to be in NJ and enjoy the lush, green landscape, towering oaks and maples, country roads, and people. It's also good to be getting back to normal life here. However, after a midnight arrival here, I received a next-morning call from a BYU Stake President Alan Ashton. A BYU high council calling will be a totally new experience for me and certainly a time for prayer. Sherlene is planning to visit the BYU ward(s) and stake with me.

Daniel and Laura are in the middle of summer term and working a bit on the side. Daniel is in an English Bible Lit course and Biblical Hebrew and working for a religion professor (I think) on some research. Laura has Social Work classes and does some ushering at the Marriott Center. Laura had an interesting class outing to the state prison where she experienced presentations from inmates in abuser / molester programs. Daniel took a weekend outing to Yellowstone. Laura took an earlier outing with friends to Moab.

If we can get the house sold, we may take another overnigher--a little Shakespeare / southern Utah break--like we did last year. Sherlene is also hoping to attend BYU's early August family history conference. We continue to pray and ask your prayers for our house sale, as well as for other extended family needs.

All Our Love! Dan, Sherlene, Daniel, and Laura